

# CALIFORNIA ACCOUNTABLE COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTH INITIATIVE



## UNITING LEADERS TO IMPROVE HEALTH

Good health is like a symphony. When all systems are playing in sync — mind, body, and spirit — the heart sings, and the music lifts up the entire community. But too many people across California are unable to experience such music, and instead are in poor health and living under harmful conditions. This is especially true for communities of color, who suffer higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, obesity, asthma and premature death.

Reversing negative health outcomes requires us to confront outdated, conventional wisdom about what makes us healthy. Today's health system is built on the premise that doctors and hospitals have the most impact on our health. Consequently, we place nearly all of the responsibility on providers to keep us well. Yet, factors associated with where people live, learn, work and play have an enormous impact on a wide range of health risks and outcomes. Often referred to by public health experts as the “social determinants of health,” these issues include income level, unemployment and education, along with the physical environment like housing, and air quality.

Building healthy communities is possible when different sectors work toward a common cause — a symphony for a healthier California. However, health providers, public safety, schools, nonprofits, and businesses and the various services and programs they provide, often work in isolation of one another — operating as solo musicians, who play their own songs.

Partnerships between these multiple organizations and individuals are essential to create healthier communities. That said, collaboration can be difficult. Many well-meaning partnerships are informal, designed to be short-term, and lack the infrastructure to make them sustainable over the long-run.

### WHO WE ARE

California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative (CACHI) was established as a public/private partnership between state government and private sector funders. This Initiative was developed in response to recommendations from the State Health Care Innovation Plan and Let's Get Healthy Task Force, advocating for a new model of health system transformation. CACHI's key partners include The California Endowment, Blue Shield of California Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, and Sierra Health Foundation, in collaboration with the California Health and Human Services Agency and California Department of Public Health. CACHI is supported by Community Partners.

## TRANSFORMING COMMUNITY HEALTH THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

The California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative (CACHI) was established to lead efforts to modernize our health system and build a healthier California. We aim to transform a system that will improve the health of entire communities, not just individual patients, and will result in greater health equity among the state’s diverse communities. To realize this vision, CACHI is utilizing a new model known as the Accountable Communities for Health (ACH). The ACH is a groundbreaking vehicle for collaboration across multiple sectors to address the most pressing health issues facing our communities.

**The ACH redefines a local health system to extend beyond the traditional health care system of health plans, hospitals, health departments, and clinics.**

An ACH brings together clinical providers with public health departments, schools, social service agencies, nonprofit organizations, business groups, public safety agencies and others, in a collective effort to make a community healthier. The ACH seeks to transform these solo players into a highly functioning orchestra.

### What makes the ACH unique?



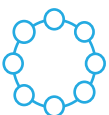
**Infrastructure.** *The ACH provides a formal and structured vehicle for continuous and fruitful partnerships.*



**Collective action.** *The ACH sets a table that catalyzes multiple sectors to work together in designing a “network of solutions” that link together and work in unison to successfully address health challenges and dramatically improve health outcomes.*



**Wellness Fund.** *A key component of the ACH is the creation of a “Wellness Fund,” which is designed to attract and weave funding and resources to support the long-term sustainability of the ACH. The Wellness Fund will also enable the ACH to align and target funding to fill gaps identified in the “network of solutions.”*



**Community Engagement.** *CACHI emphasizes and promotes the participation and inclusion of everyday residents in all aspects of the ACH, so they are actively shaping this new business model for health and, ultimately, determining the health of their communities.*

### ACHs have the potential to make a dramatic impact in the State by:

- › Promoting prevention
- › Achieving health equity among diverse populations
- › Maximizing limited public and private resources

## AN EMERGING AND INNOVATIVE HEALTH SYSTEM

California joins an emerging movement of states and communities throughout the nation that are adopting the ACH model. Stakeholders in regions across California are embracing the promise of the ACH, and are actively engaged in efforts to make it a reality.

CACHI supports a total of 15 communities throughout California — through two distinct efforts — to promote ACHs as a new business model for health.

The first group, known as **Catalyst Communities**, is building the infrastructure of an ACH and fully implementing the model. Over the three-year initiative, these six communities will establish the basic foundation of the ACH, including recruitment of key partners to participate in the collaborative and establishment of a governance structure. These communities are creating action plans defining specific steps being taken to address priority health issues such as reducing cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma, trauma and community violence.

The second group, called **Accelerator Communities**, is designed to help bring the ACH model to scale in California. Each of these 9 communities is receiving support by CACHI to facilitate advancement through the early developmental stages of the model over an 18-month period.

**While each of these 15 sites is addressing a particular local issue, each also shares the same defining characteristics of the model:**

- › A shared vision and commitment to improve the health of the whole community;
- › A central, coordinating entity responsible for spearheading the ACH's activities;
- › A Wellness Fund that attracts and weaves funding and resources to support the ACH's long-term sustainability;
- › A coordinated and aligned set of prevention and intervention strategies that include clinical care, community programs and social services, explicit linkages between the clinical and community settings, policy reforms and improvements in a community's physical surroundings;
- › Data systems to enable the ACH to facilitate coordination and track progress.

To learn more about CACHI, please contact  
Barbara Masters at [CACHImgr@communitypartners.org](mailto:CACHImgr@communitypartners.org)  
or visit the website at [www.CACHI.org](http://www.CACHI.org)



\* Receives administrative support from Community Partners, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit intermediary organization and fiscal sponsor that helps foster, launch and grow creative solutions to community challenges.

\*\* Receives administrative support from the Public Health Institute, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting health, well-being, and quality of life for people throughout California, across the nation, and around the world.